



# FRIENDS OF MORWELL NATIONAL PARK INC.

P.O. BOX 19

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## MARCH 1992 NEWSLETTER

Firstly a reminder that the March activity for the Friends is helping out at the Yinnar South Country Fair on Saturday 14th March. The Fair is a worthwhile family visit anyway, and an hour or more spent helping with the FMNP display or on the various catering stalls or games organised by the Fair Committee would be much appreciated. Please contact Yvonne (Tel: 222597) if you are able to help in any way at all.

The February activity day was most enjoyable - the picnic table to be installed was loaded on to the trailer, and members of the Friends group perched in and on the Park truck and trailer and were taken from the Braniff's road entrance down into the Creek area. The truck was well tested as it pulled the load over the Creek fords - I am pleased to report that we did not dunk/lose any members, although there were a couple of "hairy" moments. The picnic table was duly installed in the "potato patch area", and we went on to the weir for Billy tea and a cake for somebody's birthday: I hope the birds appreciated our singing.

Upon closer inspection, the remains of the farm machinery was found to be perhaps not of as much historical interest to the Park as was first thought. However, it was loaded up and taken to the Depot for further investigation. We were running fairly late by this stage so did not stop to inspect last year's tree plantings in the Creek area closely, but it was obvious in passing that the trees were thriving. Healthy looking specimens were growing well above their treeguards.

A word of warning that the Braniff's road entrance has an electric fence across it currently (oops. pardon the pun!). This can be negotiated if you wish to walk down the Creek from here, but take care.

There seems to be quite a bit of interest in the Seminar to be held at the Melbourne Herbarium on the 21st March, so if you would like to go but need transport contact Ken Harris (223137).

Wendy Nickson  
Newsletter Editor

Ken has produced the attached information on butterflies in the Morwell NP. If anyone would like to submit such items of interest for circulation to members. or information to go in the Newsletter, please do not hesitate to do so.

## Butterflies in Morwell National Park by Ken Harris

In Recent visits to the park, I have begun to build up a list of butterflies seen with in the park.

I have so far identified nine species and seen at least two other unidentified species.

I have obtained photographs of four species (though only with their wings closed).

The two commonest species are the large Common Brown and the introduced Small or Cabbage White. The Common Brown is common throughout the park all summer. Males and females are markedly different, with the females quite a bit larger than the males. Small Whites are less common in the bush, but are very common along Billys Creek.

This summer, I have often seen two other species of brown, particularly during February. These are Klug's Xenica and the Ringed Xenica, both smaller than the Common Brown.

The tiny little Common Grass Blue can be numerous in grassy areas.

Two particularly beautiful butterflies are not uncommon in the park. The Imperial White, with bright red and yellow patterns on its closed wings feeds its caterpillars on the drooping mistletoe. The Australian Admiral is perhaps the only reason to welcome the presence of stinging nettles. Without them, we would have no Admirals, as their caterpillars only feed on nettles.

The skippers are quite a large group of butterflies and are certainly represented in the park. I have identified one, the Dispar Skipper. I am sure I have seen two other species, but have not so far been able to identify them.

The last species is another introduction, the magnificent Monarch or Wanderer Butterfly from America. This is quite common North from Sydney, where its food plant, the milkweed has been introduced. They appear sporadically in Victoria and I saw one in Foster's Gully in 1986.

One species which is common in the area, but which I have not yet seen in the park, is the Australian Painted Lady. Perhaps I just haven't looked at the right time.

The complete list so far is:

### Family **NYMPHALIDAE**

* <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	Monarch, Wanderer or Milkweed Butterfly
<i>Heteronympha merope</i>	Common Brown
<i>Geitoneura klugi</i>	Klug's Xenica
<i>Geitoneura acanthi</i>	Ringed Xenica
<i>Vanessa itea</i>	Australian Admiral

### Family **LYCAENIDAE**

<i>Zizinia otis</i>	Common Grass Blue
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### Family **PIERIDAE**

<i>Delias harpalyce</i>	Imperial White
* <i>Pieris rapae</i>	Small or Cabbage White

### Family **HESPERIIDAE**

<i>Dispar compacta</i>	Dispar Skipper
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\* = Introduced species